

The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London could play the shrew on the bench with the best of them, and Martin did not entirely miss the mark, though abuse in place of argument did not help to settle the controversy. He certainly made himself notorious and his enemies furious, and the authorised presses were kept busy for years printing the retorts of the episcopal champions. "Pappe with a hatchet, or a sound box of the ear for the idiot Martin to hold his peace," "An Almond for a Parrot," "A Counter Cuff given to Martin Junior," drubbed the obnoxious pamphleteer in his own sledge-hammer, scurrilous style, and poured contempt and ridicule on Puritan "cussedness" and hypocrisy. This tournament of abuse was as tremendous an affair as the Armada itself. England, it seems, was so engrossed by this tilting of nameless scribblers, that Philip of Spain seriously calculated how much political capital he could make out of "the new sect of Martinists." Martin's printing press was the subject of a royal proclamation "for the bringing in of all seditious and schismatical books . . . to the ordinary or to one of the Privy Council," and threatening their authors and abettors with the severest penalties as soon as they should be apprehended (13th February 1589). But how to catch this invisible enemy of Church and State was a problem that the united wisdom of the High Commission, Star Chamber, Privy Council, could not solve. Martin was as great an enchanter as Merlin himself. He would spirit himself away from place to place in spite of the hue and cry raised for him all over the country. His pursuers chased his printing press from Moulsey to Fawsley in Northamptonshire, from Fawsley to Norton, from Norton to Coventry, from Coventry to Woolston in Warwickshire, and only after several years' hunt did the Earl of Derby run it to earth at Manchester. It was seized at the house of Sir Richard Knightley, who, along with the printers Waldgrave and Hodgkins, and the distributor Newman, was imprisoned and heavily fined. At the archbishop's intercession, however, the fines were subsequently remitted.

Martin Marprelate still remained a mystery in spite of the efforts to discover his identity. He was probably a secret association, and suspicion fastened on two ministers, Penry